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Jayadratha

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Jayadratha is one of the most despicable characters to be found in the Mahabharata. He terrorised the helpless and cowered before the mighty. The encounter between him and Arjuna, the valiant Pandava, described in the *Jayadratha-Vadha Parva* (a sub-section of the *Drona Parva* of the Mahabharata), makes absorbing reading.

Jayadratha was responsible for the death of Arjuna's son, Abhimanyu. Arjuna set out to avenge his son's death and the cowardly Jayadratha took shelter behind the massive army of Duryodhana.

How Arjuna surmounted the obstacles put in his way in his final encounter with Jayadratha is narrated in this Amar Chitra Katha.



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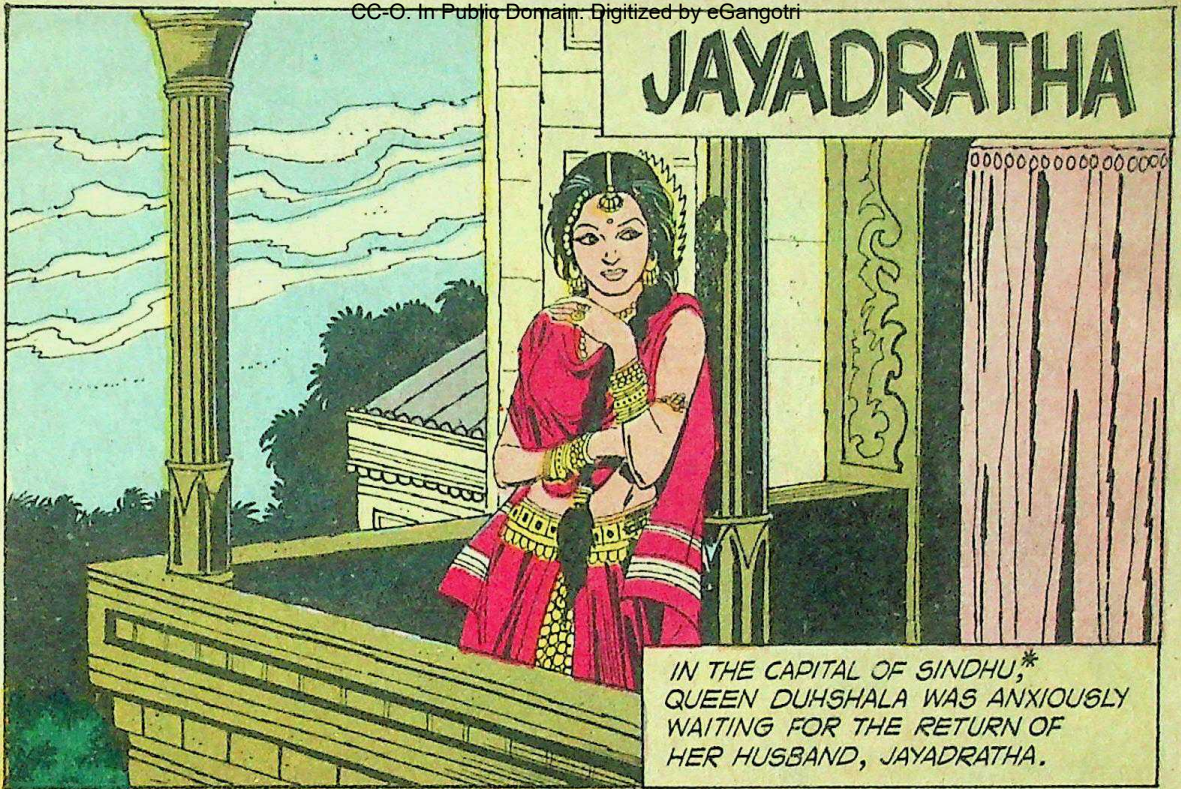
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JAYADRATHA



IN THE CAPITAL OF SINDHU,*
QUEEN DUHSHALA WAS ANXIOUSLY
WAITING FOR THE RETURN OF
HER HUSBAND, JAYADRATHA.

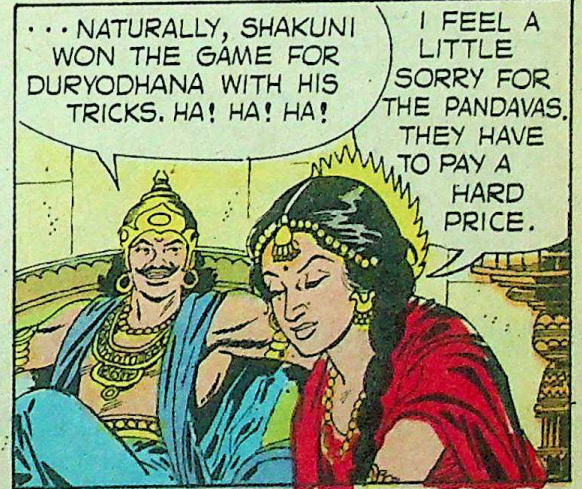


A CLOUD OF DUST IN
THE DISTANCE! IT
MUST BE MY HUSBAND
RETURNING FROM
HASTINAPURA.



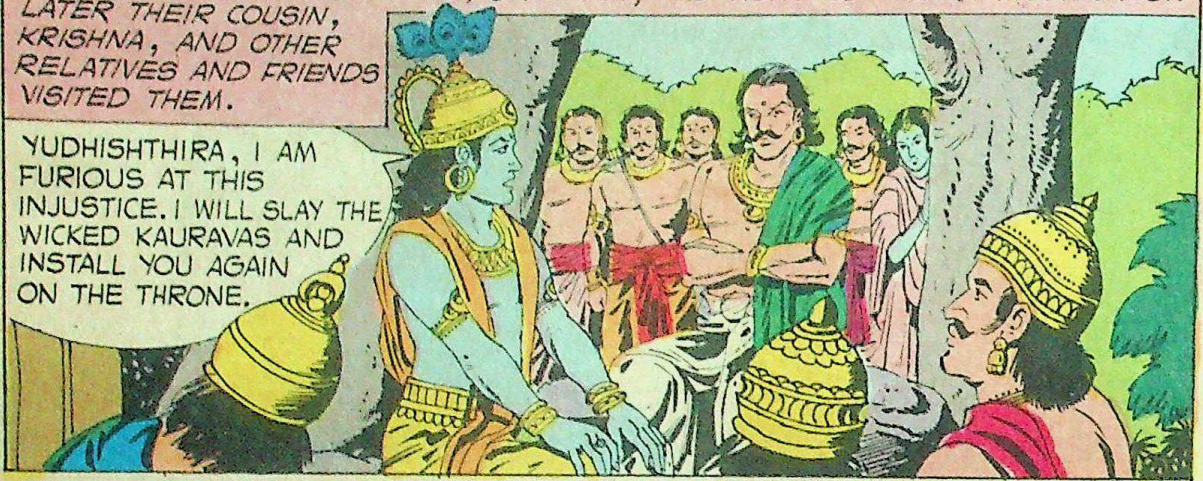
YES, HE'S
HERE! I CAN SEE
HIS CHARIOT QUITE
CLEARLY NOW.





MEANWHILE THE PANDAVAS—YUDHISHTHIRA, BHISHMA, ARJUNA, NAKULA AND SAHADEVA—WITH THEIR WIFE, DRAUPADI, HAD REACHED THE KAMYAKA FOREST. LATER THEIR COUSIN, KRISHNA, AND OTHER RELATIVES AND FRIENDS VISITED THEM.

YUDHISHTHIRA, I AM FURIOUS AT THIS INJUSTICE. I WILL SLAY THE WICKED KAURAVAS AND INSTALL YOU AGAIN ON THE THRONE.



KRISHNA, HAVING PLAYED THE GAME I ACCEPT THE OUTCOME. BUT AFTER THIRTEEN YEARS WE WILL RETURN.



YOU ARE JUST AND NOBLE, YUDHISHTHIRA.

FAREWELL, MY FRIENDS. GOD WILLING, WE WILL MEET AGAIN IN HAPPIER TIMES.



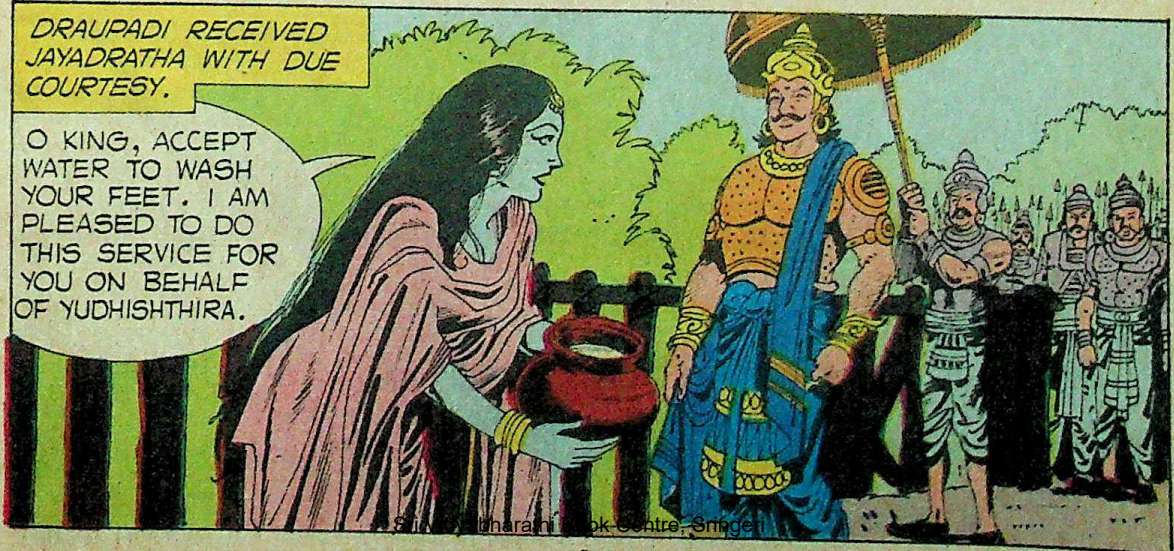
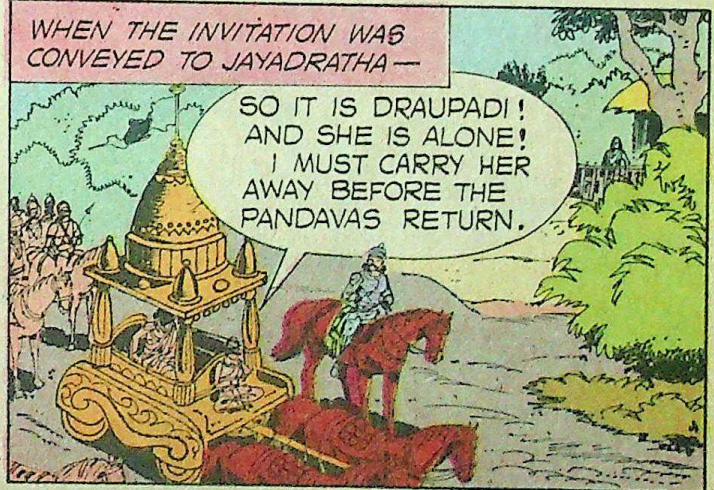
FAREWELL!

FAREWELL!

THE PANDAVAS PASSED SEVERAL YEARS IN THE FOREST. ONE DAY THEY HAD GONE AWAY AS USUAL IN SEARCH OF GAME LEAVING DRAUPADI AT HOME.

THERE SEEM TO BE A LOT OF PEOPLE COMING THIS WAY. WHO COULD THEY BE?



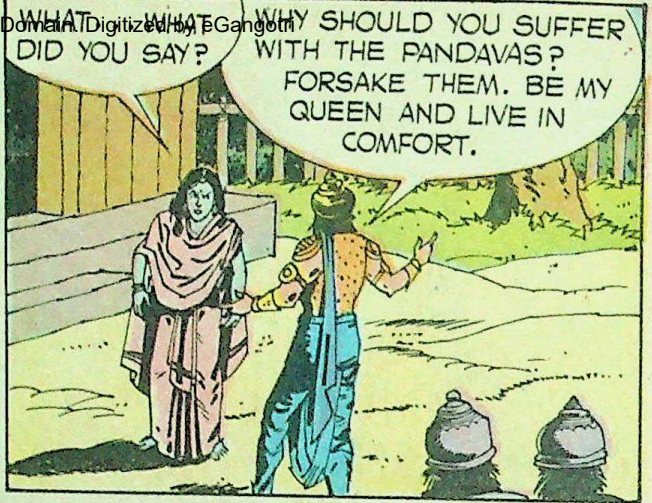


AND I WILL BE PLEASED IF YOU WILL COME WITH ME AND BE MY QUEEN!



WHAT DID YOU SAY?

WHY SHOULD YOU SUFFER WITH THE PANDAVAS? FORSAKE THEM. BE MY QUEEN AND LIVE IN COMFORT.



TO LAY HANDS ON ME IS TO INVITE THE WRATH OF ARJUNA AND BHIMA UPON YOURSELF. IT IS LIKE KICKING A SLEEPING LION. GO AT ONCE, IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE!



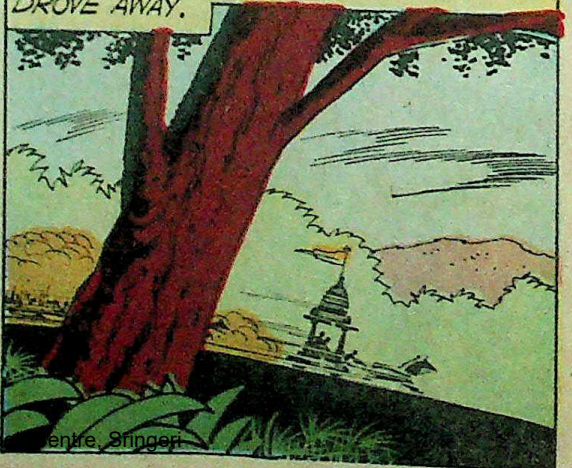
YOU CAN'T FRIGHTEN ME WITH SUCH THREATS!



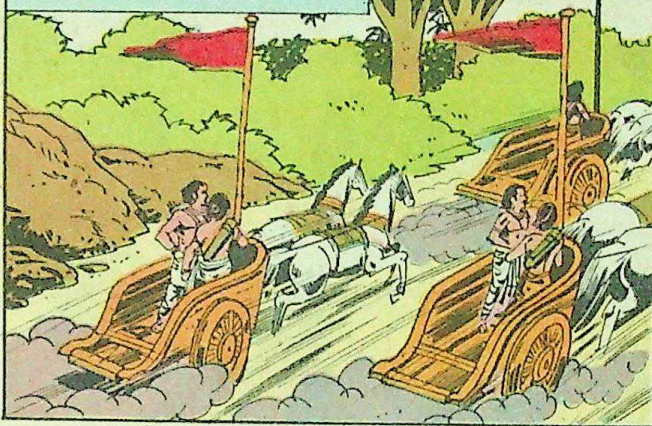
WRETCH, DON'T DEFILE ME WITH YOUR TOUCH!



DISREGARDING HER ANGER, JAYADRATHA CARRIED HER TO HIS CHARIOT AND DROVE AWAY.



MEANWHILE THE PANDAVAS WERE RETURNING FROM THE HUNT —



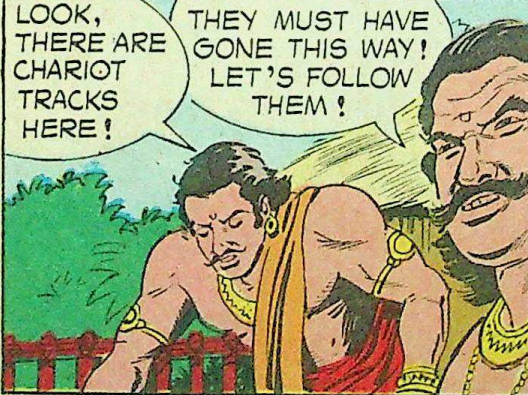
THE BIRDS SEEM AGITATED. COULD SOME HOSTILE PEOPLE HAVE COME HERE? LET'S GO FASTER.



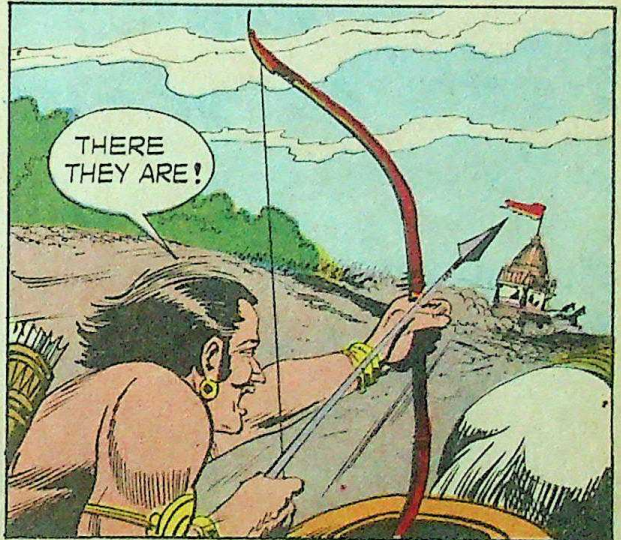
IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE THE PANDAVAS DISCOVERED THAT DRAUPADI HAD BEEN ABDUCTED. IMMEDIATELY THEY SET OUT IN SEARCH OF HER.

LOOK, THERE ARE CHARIOT TRACKS HERE!

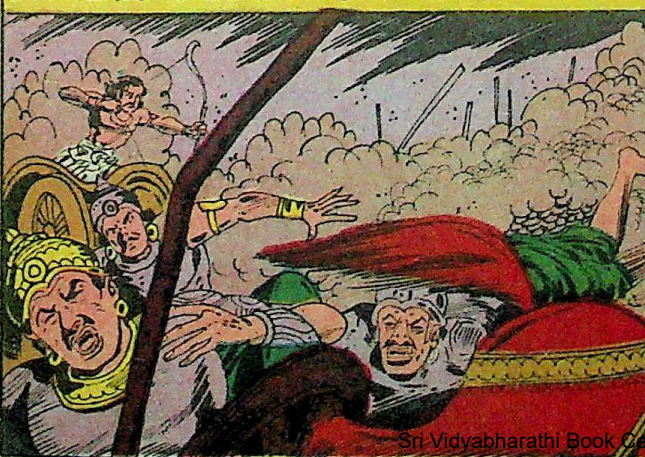
THEY MUST HAVE GONE THIS WAY! LET'S FOLLOW THEM!



THERE THEY ARE!



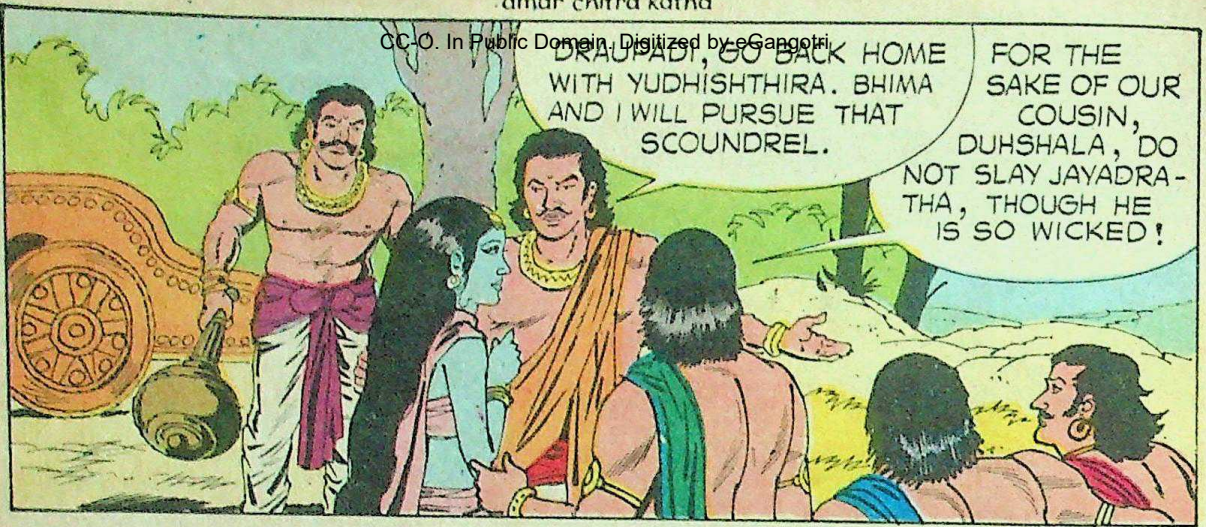
IN THE BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED, THE PANDAVAS SCATTERED JAYADRATHA'S ARMY.



JAYADRATHA FLED FOR HIS LIFE LEAVING DRAUPADI BEHIND.



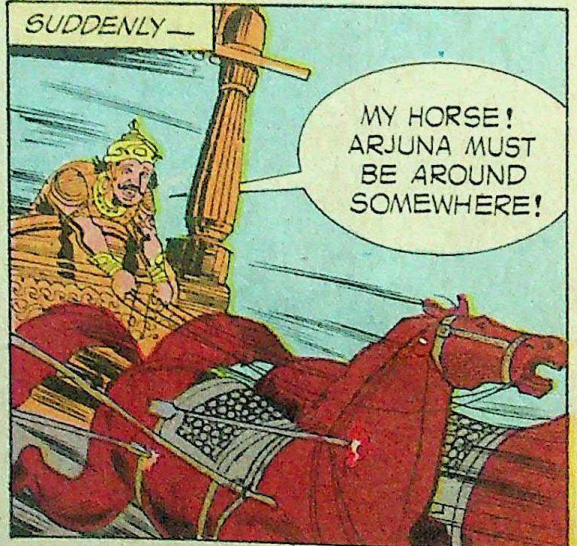
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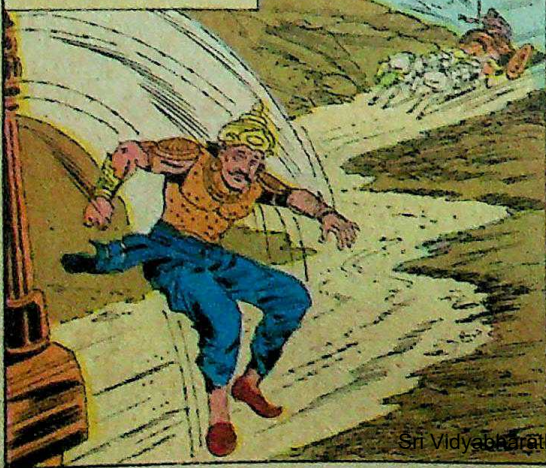
JAYADRATHA WAS UNAWARE THAT BHIMA AND ARJUNA WERE ON HIS TRAIL.



SUDDENLY—



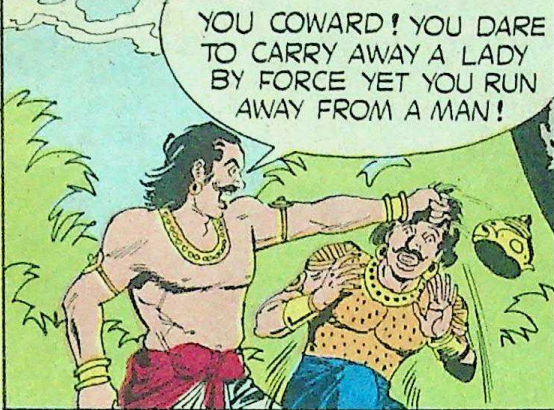
JAYADRATHA SPRANG OUT OF HIS CHARIOT...



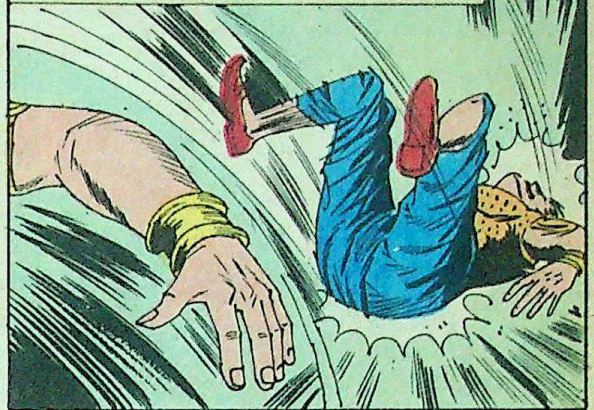
...AND STARTED TO RUN.



BHIMA SEIZED JAYADRATHA BY THE HAIR AND HELD HIM.



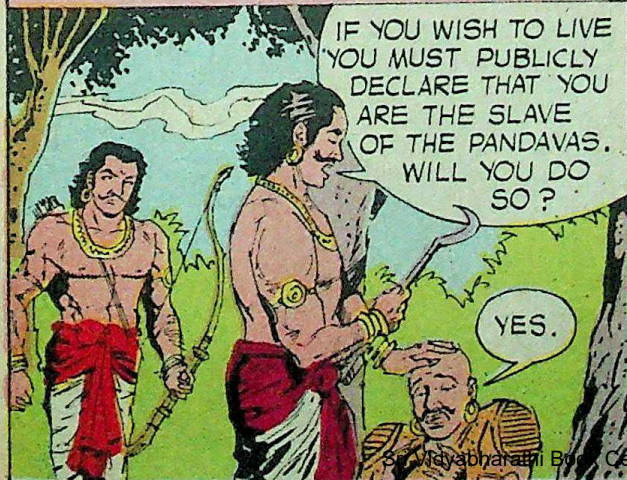
BHIMA THEN THREW HIM TO THE GROUND WITH GREAT FORCE.



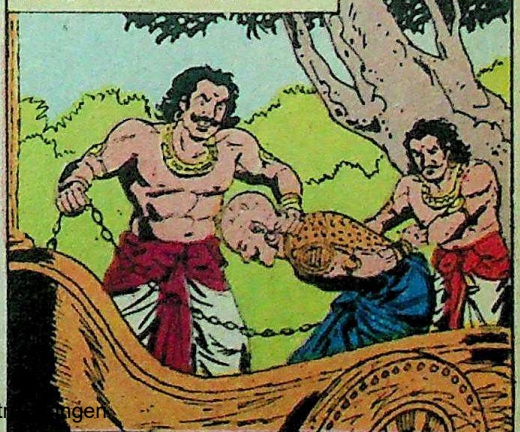
JAYADRATHA TRIED TO RUN AWAY, BUT BHIMA KICKED HIM HARD AND PRESSED HIM DOWN —



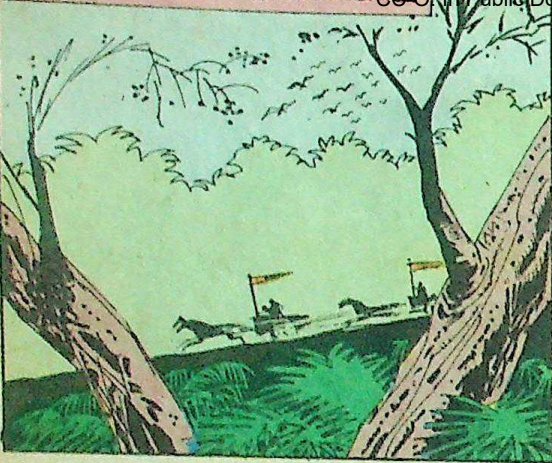
THEN BHIMA SHAVED JAYADRATHA'S HEAD.



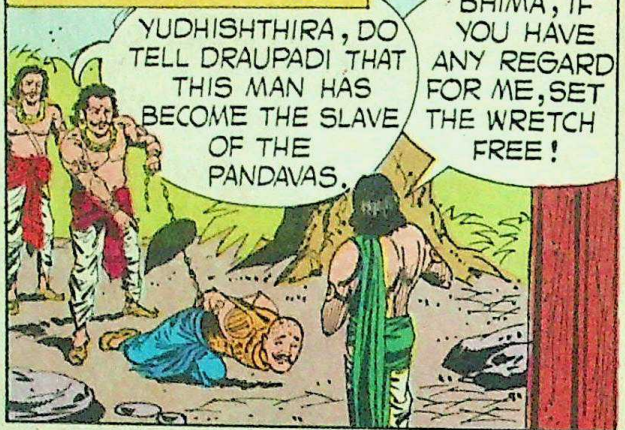
THEN ARJUNA AND BHIMA BOUND JAYADRATHA IN CHAINS, THRUST HIM INTO THE CHARIOT...



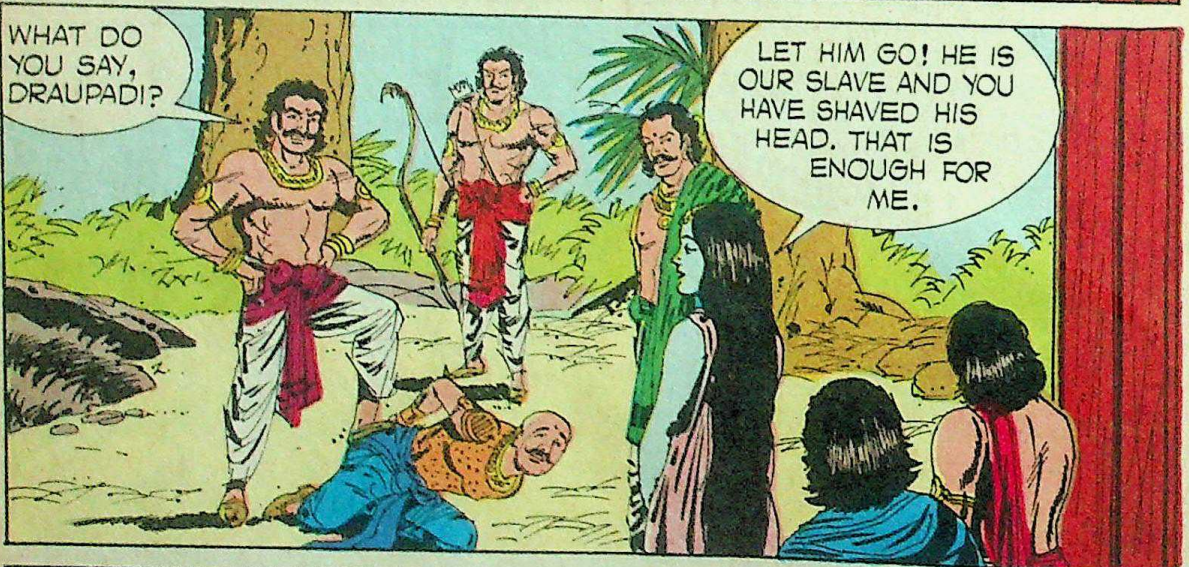
... AND DROVE BACK HOME.



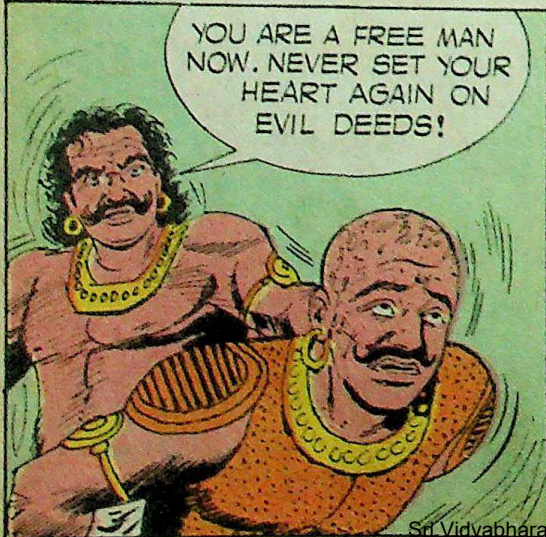
HERE JAYADRATHA WAS THROWN AT YUDHISHTHIRA'S FEET.



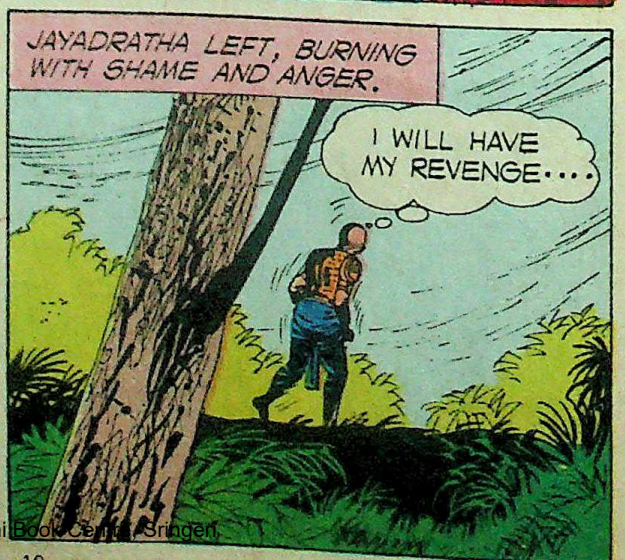
WHAT DO YOU SAY, DRAUPADI?



YOU ARE A FREE MAN NOW. NEVER SET YOUR HEART AGAIN ON EVIL DEEDS!



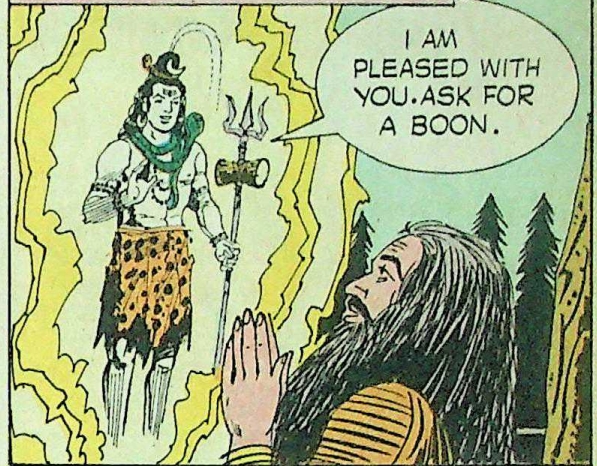
JAYADRATHA LEFT, BURNING WITH SHAME AND ANGER.



HE WENT TO THE BANKS OF THE GANGA AND, IMPLORING THE PROTECTION OF LORD SHIVA, HE OBSERVED SEVERE PENANCES.



MANY YEARS PASSED BY. AT LAST LORD SHIVA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



LORD, I WANT TO BE ABLE TO DEFEAT ALL FIVE OF THE PANDAVAS IN BATTLE!

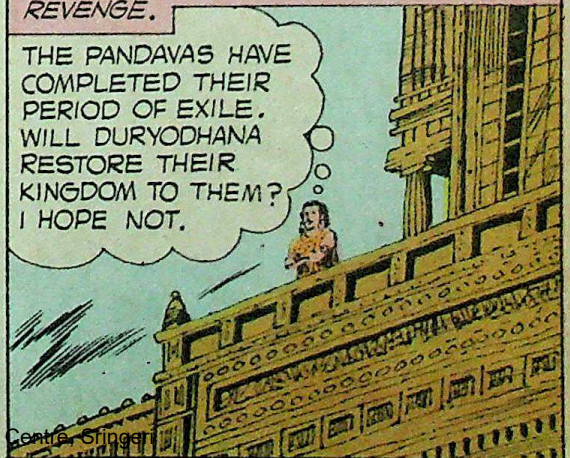


HOWEVER, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO CHECK THE ADVANCE OF THE PANDAVAS ONCE. BUT EVEN SO YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO STOP ARJUNA.



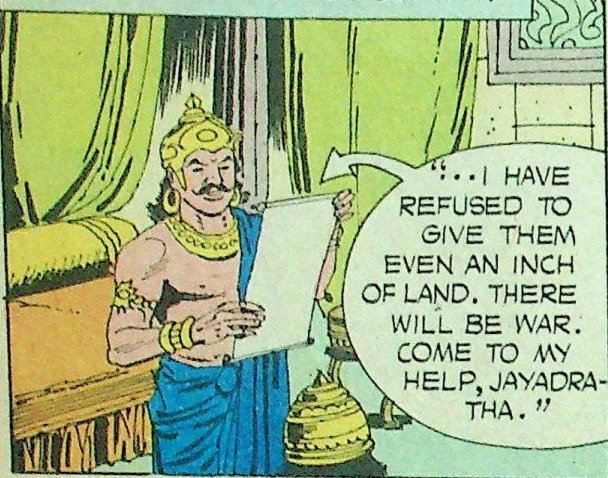
JAYADRATHA RETURNED TO HIS KINGDOM. THEN HE BEGAN HIS LONG WAIT FOR REVENGE.

THE PANDAVAS HAVE COMPLETED THEIR PERIOD OF EXILE. WILL DURYODHANA RESTORE THEIR KINGDOM TO THEM? I HOPE NOT.

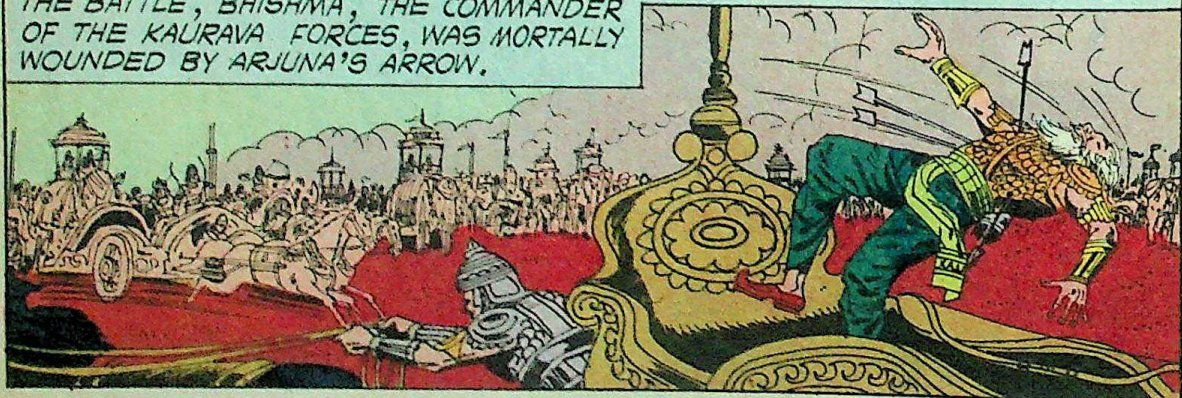


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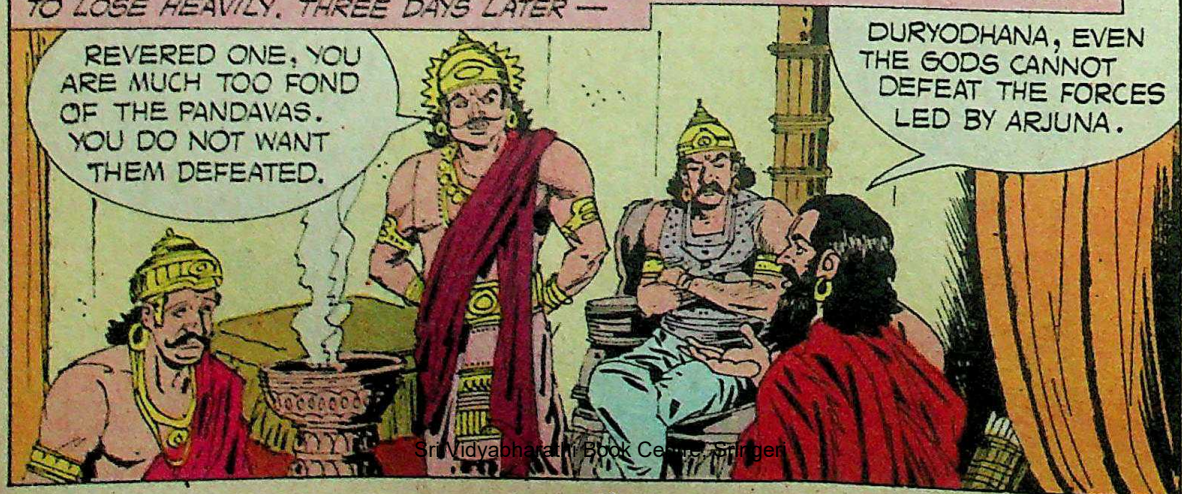
THEN ONE MORNING HE RECEIVED
A MESSAGE FROM DURYODHANA.

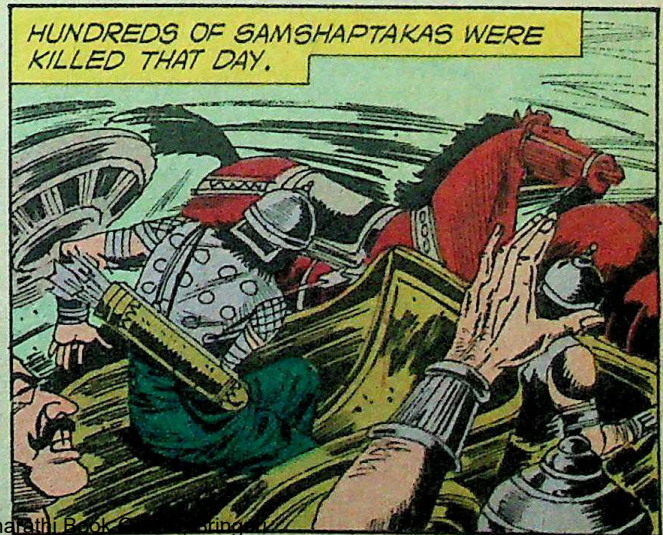
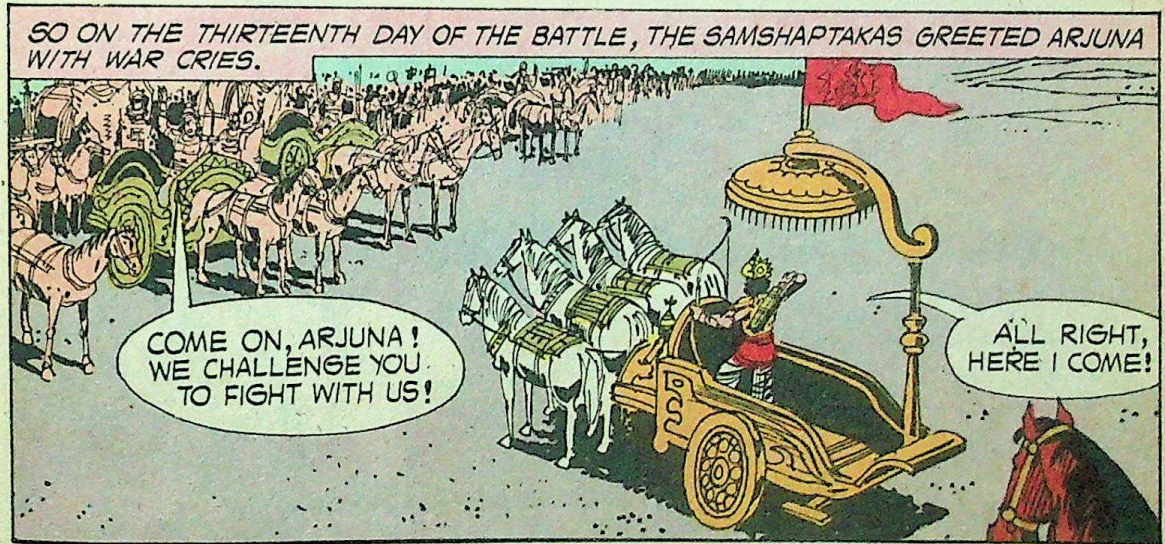
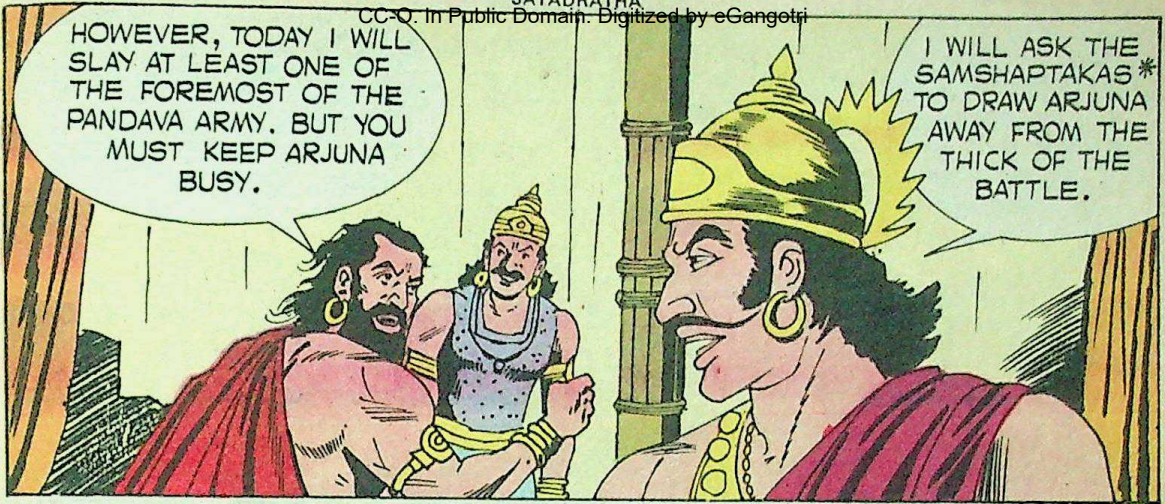


THE GREAT WAR BETWEEN THE KAURAVAS AND THE PANDAVAS WAS FOUGHT ON THE FIELD OF KURUKSHETRA. WITH KRISHNA DRIVING HIS CHARIOT, ARJUNA ATTACKED THE KAURAVA FORCES WITH LIGHTNING SPEED. ON THE TENTH DAY OF THE BATTLE, BHISHMA, THE COMMANDER OF THE KAURAVA FORCES, WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED BY ARJUNA'S ARROW.



DRONA TOOK HIS PLACE AS COMMANDER, BUT THE KAURAVAS CONTINUED TO LOSE HEAVILY. THREE DAYS LATER —





AS NIGHT FELL, BOTH SIDES RETURNED TO THEIR CAMPS. ALTHOUGH HE WAS VICTORIOUS, ARJUNA WAS NOT HAPPY.

KRISHNA, I FEEL UNEASY. SOME UNKNOWN FEAR HAS SEIZED ME. I HOPE ALL IS WELL WITH MY BROTHERS.

DON'T WORRY, ARJUNA. NOT ONE OF THE KAURAVAS CAN EQUAL THEM IN STRENGTH OR VALOUR.

SOON THEY REACHED THEIR CAMP—

I DON'T HEAR THE LAUGHTER OF OUR MEN. AND WHERE IS MY SON, ABHIMANYU? WHY ISN'T HE HERE TO GREET ME?

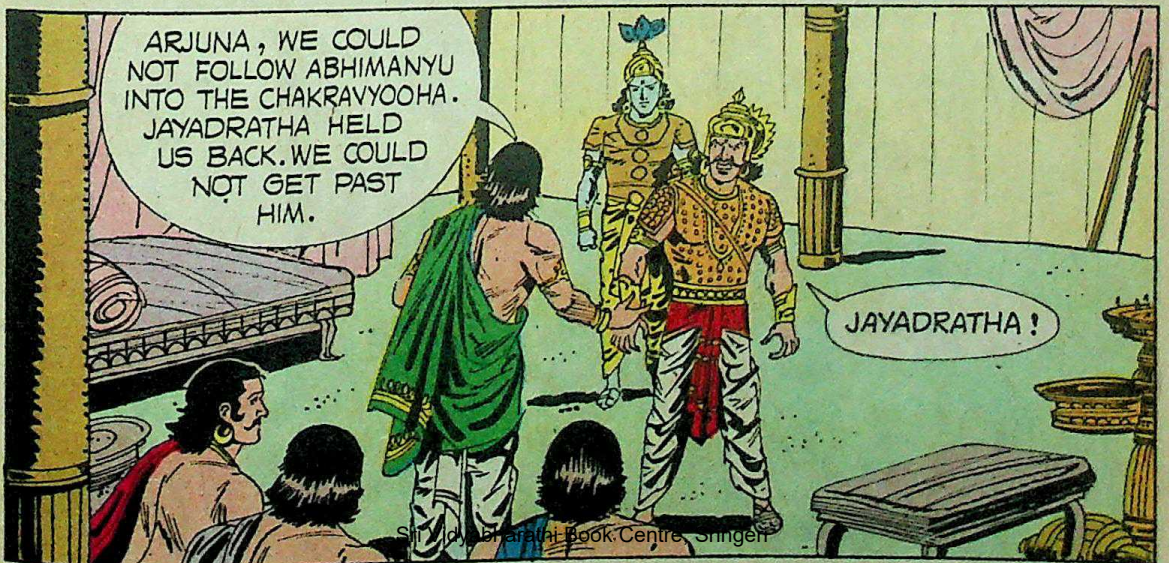
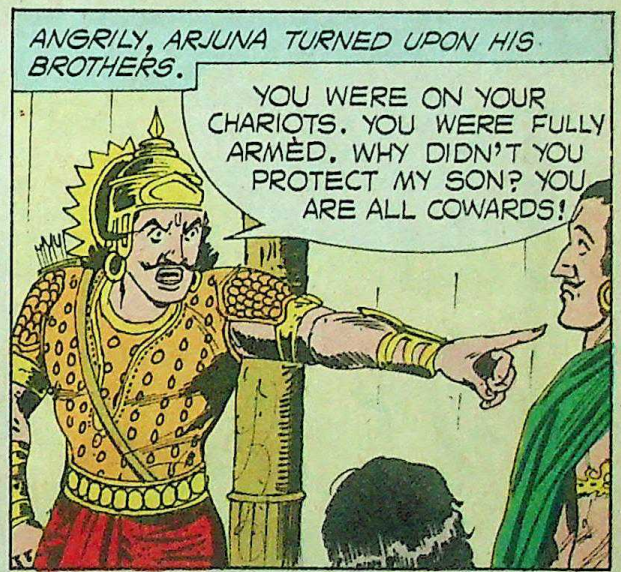
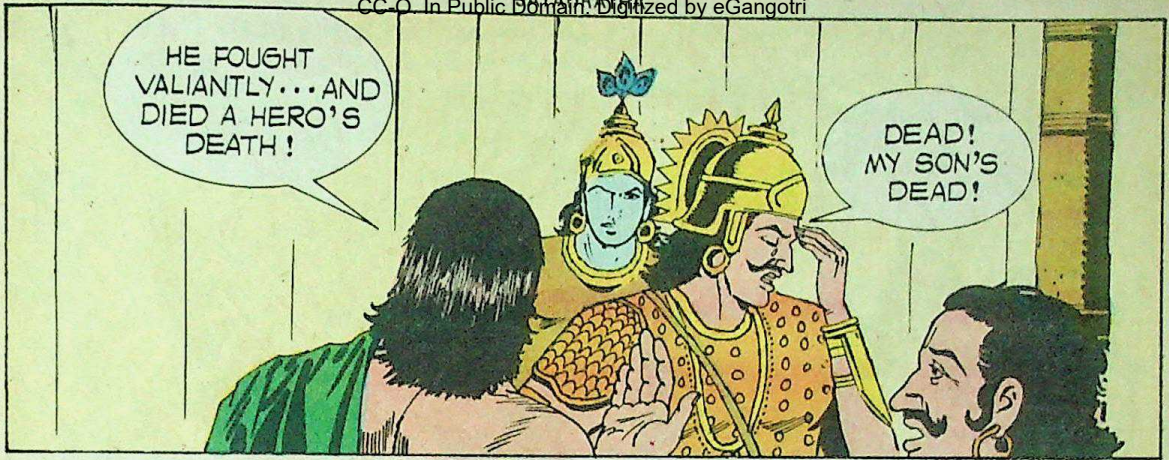
WHEN HE ENTERED THE TENT, HE SAW HIS BROTHERS SITTING ALL CHEERLESS, PLUNGED IN GRIEF.

WHAT'S WRONG? WHERE IS ABHIMANYU?

BUT NO ONE REPLIED.

DRONA USED THE CHAKRAVYOOHA BATTLE FORMATION TODAY. YOU DIDN'T ASK ABHIMANYU TO PENETRATE IT, DID YOU?

WE DID, ARJUNA. WE HAD TO!

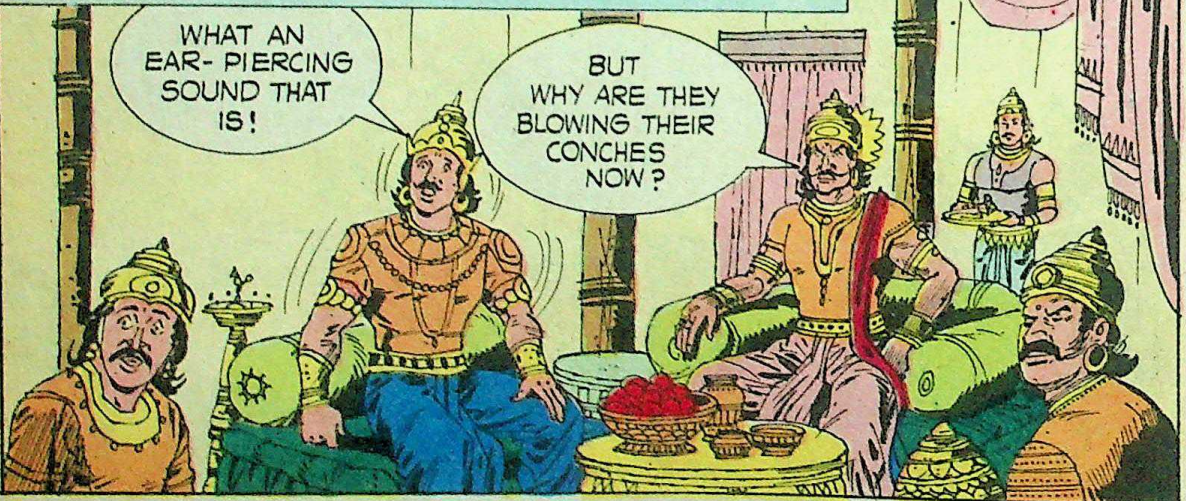


THEN ARJUNA TOOK A TERRIBLE FURY.

PRISHNA BLEW THEIR CONCH-SHELLS LOUDLY...



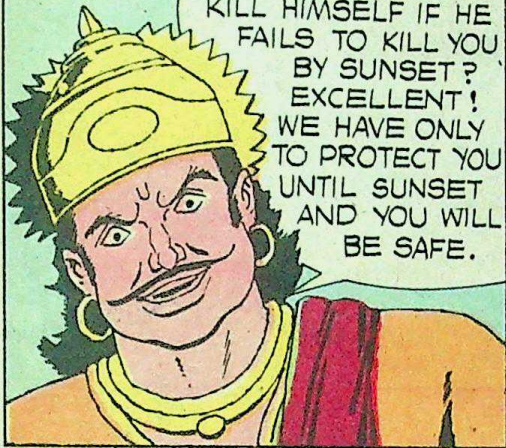
... SENDING A WAVE OF FEAR INTO THE ENEMY'S CAMP.



JUST THEN JAYADRATHA TOTTERED IN.



JAYADRATHA TOLD HIM OF ARJUNA'S VOW —



SO ARJUNA WILL KILL HIMSELF IF HE FAILS TO KILL YOU BY SUNSET? EXCELLENT! WE HAVE ONLY TO PROTECT YOU UNTIL SUNSET AND YOU WILL BE SAFE.

JAYADRATHA FELT REASSURED.

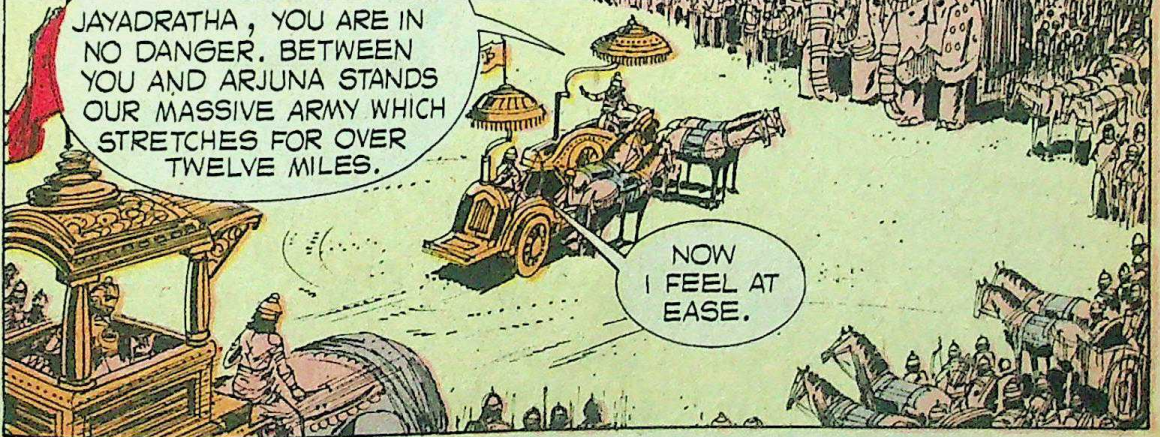
I'VE BEEN FOOLISH. YOU CAN PROTECT A MAN FROM THE LORD OF DEATH HIMSELF. I DON'T HAVE TO FEAR ARJUNA.

MY ENTIRE ARMY WILL PROTECT YOU. AND AS FOR ARJUNA, YOU WILL SEE HIM ENTERING THE FIRE.



THE NEXT DAY DRONA MADE CAREFUL PREPARATIONS.

JAYADRATHA, YOU ARE IN NO DANGER. BETWEEN YOU AND ARJUNA STANDS OUR MASSIVE ARMY WHICH STRETCHES FOR OVER TWELVE MILES.



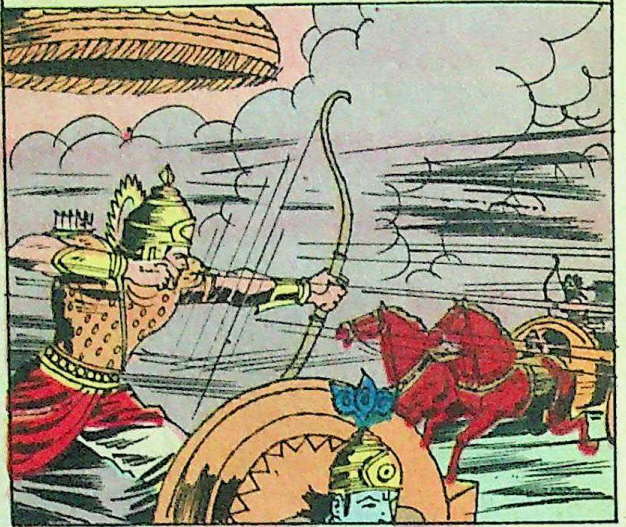
DRONA TOOK HIS POSITION AT THE HEAD OF HIS ARMY. ARJUNA ARRIVED AT THE BATTLEFIELD WITH A HUGE ARMY AND SALUTED DRONA.

MASTER, BLESS ME. YOU TRAINED ME IN WARFARE. THROUGH YOUR GRACE, I WISH TO SLAY JAYADRATHA IN THE BATTLE.



WE ARE ON OPPOSING SIDES, ARJUNA. YOU MUST VANQUISH ME FIRST BEFORE YOU CAN REACH, JAYADRATHA.

GREAT WAS THE BATTLE THAT WAS FOUGHT BETWEEN MASTER AND PUPIL.



FINALLY —

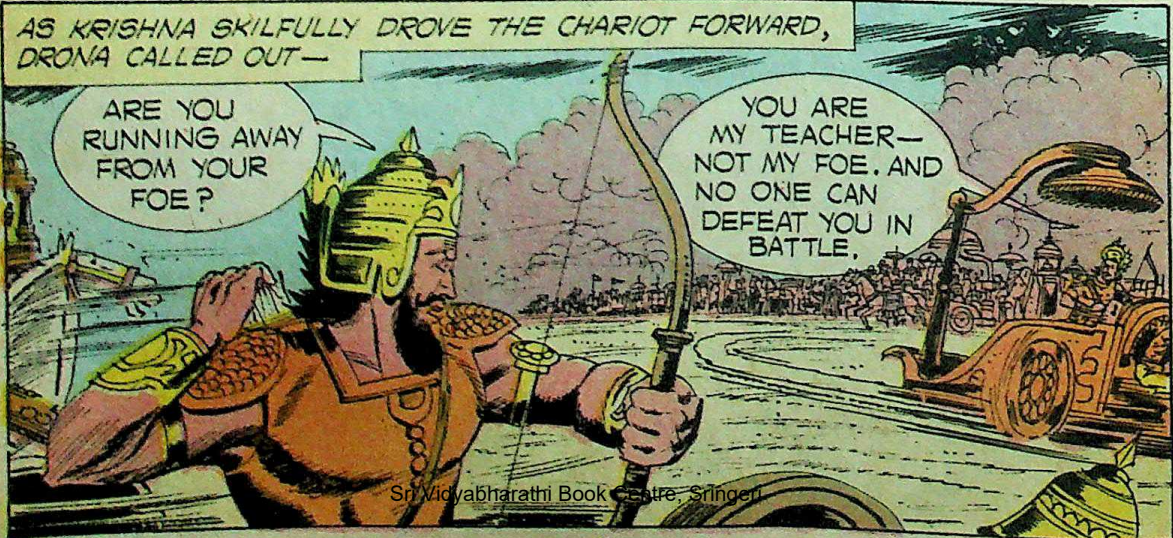
ARJUNA, DRONA WILL KEEP US HERE THE WHOLE DAY. WE MUST SLIP PAST HIM SOMEHOW.



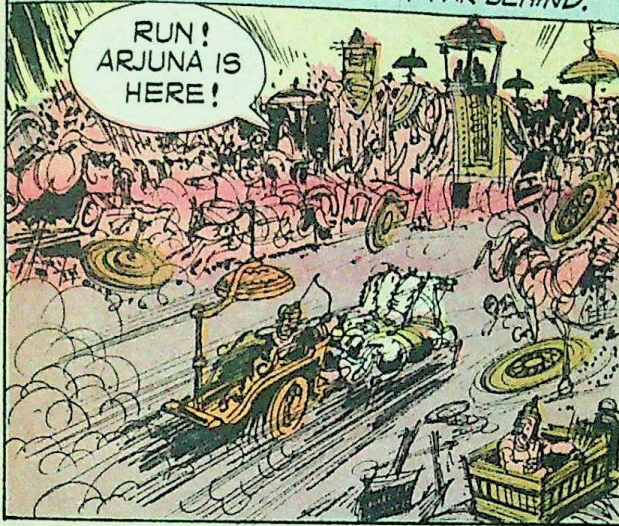
AS KRISHNA SKILFULLY DROVE THE CHARIOT FORWARD, DRONA CALLED OUT —

ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY FROM YOUR FOE?

YOU ARE MY TEACHER — NOT MY FOE. AND NO ONE CAN DEFEAT YOU IN BATTLE.



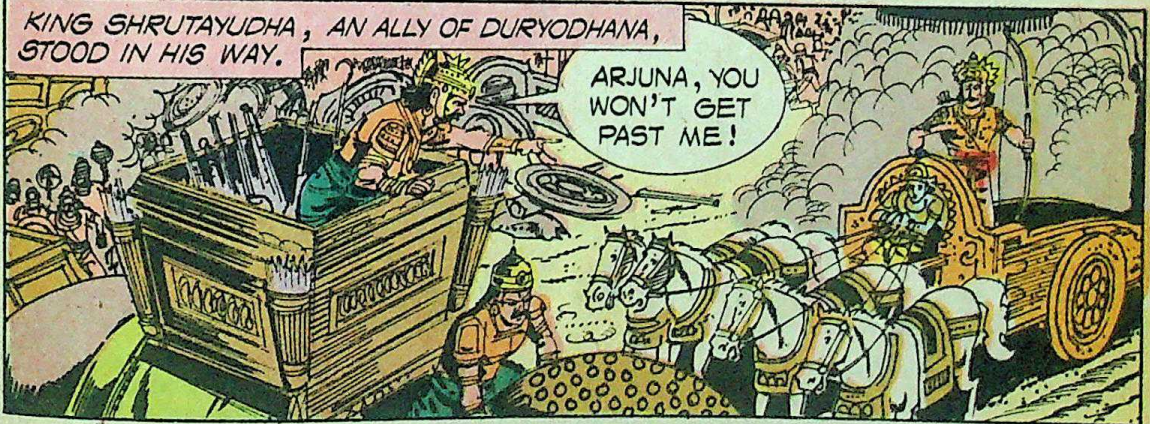
ARJUNA RELEASED A VOLLEY OF ARROWS TO CLEAR THE WAY. THEN HE CHARGED FORWARD LEAVING HIS ARMY FAR BEHIND.



HERE COMES ARJUNA!



KING SHRUTAYUDHA, AN ALLY OF DURYODHANA, STOOD IN HIS WAY.



AND YOU, KRISHNA, ARE THE POWER BEHIND ARJUNA. I WILL KILL YOU, TOO.



A FIERCE BATTLE ENSUED.

BOON HAS MADE HIM POWERFUL.

IS THERE NO WAY OF DEFEATING HIM?



ONLY ONE PERSON CAN BRING ABOUT HIS DEATH—SHRUTAYUDHA HIMSELF.

HOW?



JUST THEN—

KRISHNA! WATCH OUT!



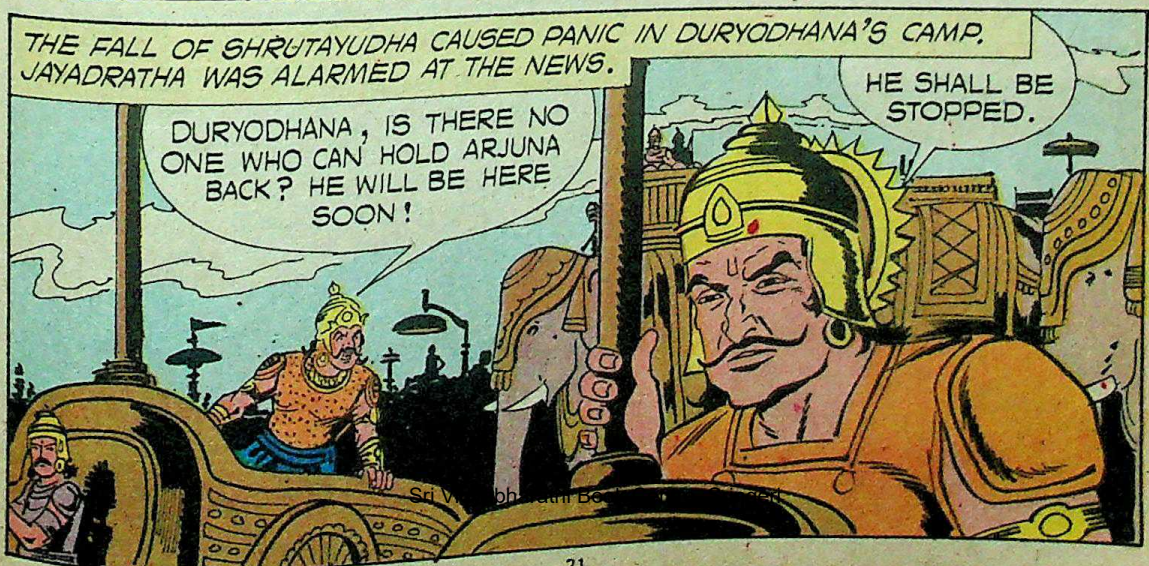
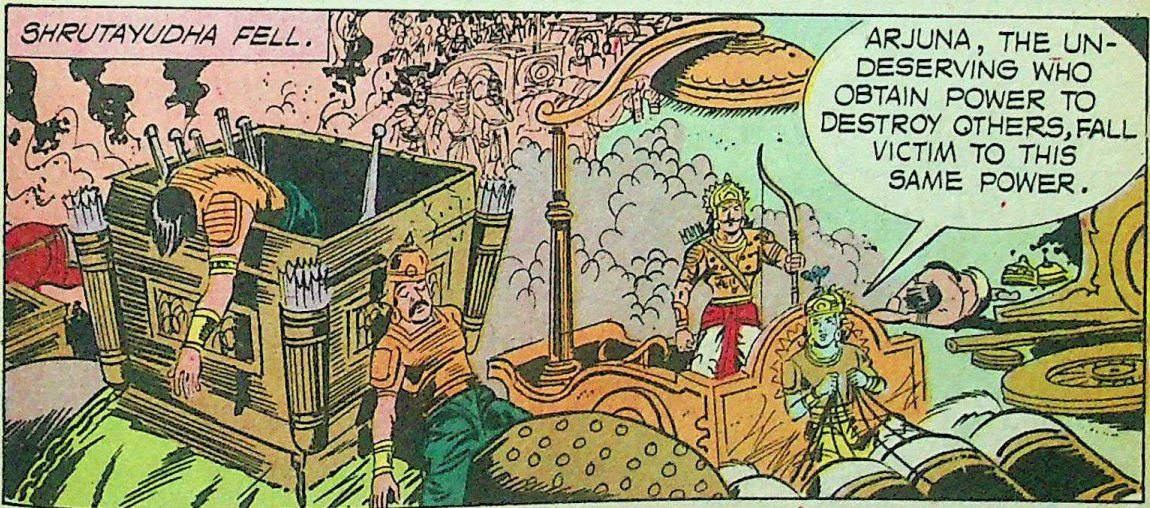
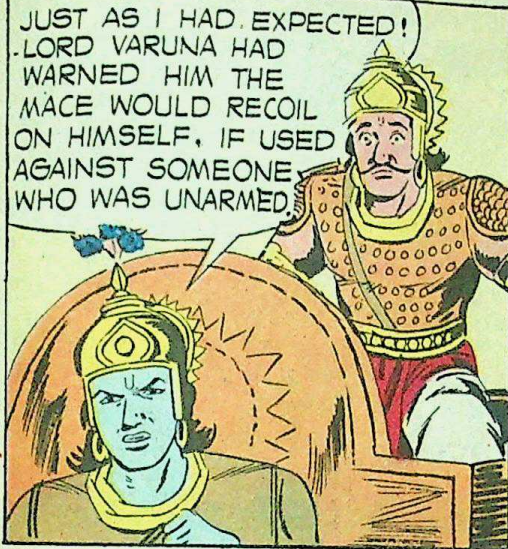
BUT KRISHNA SMILINGLY RECEIVED THE MACE ON HIS SHOULDER.

KRISHNA!

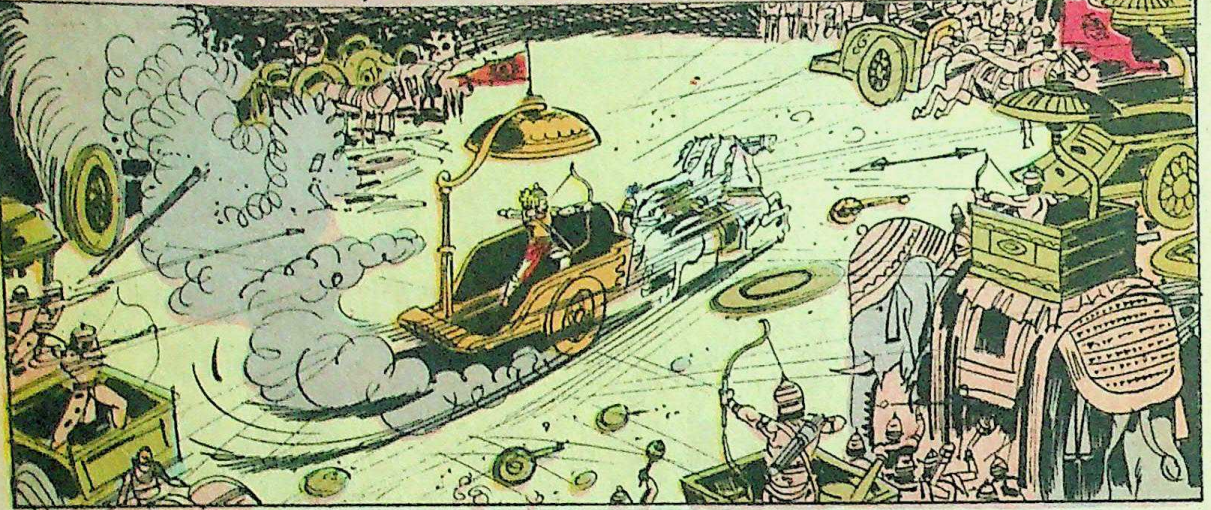
TO ARJUNA'S AMAZEMENT, KRISHNA WAS UNHURT—

OH! THE MACE HAS BOUNCED BACK!





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URGED BY DURYODHANA, HUNDREDS OF WARRIORS FELL UPON ARJUNA.



THEN THE MIGHTY WARRIOR, SHRUTAYU, HURLED HIS SPEAR AT ARJUNA.

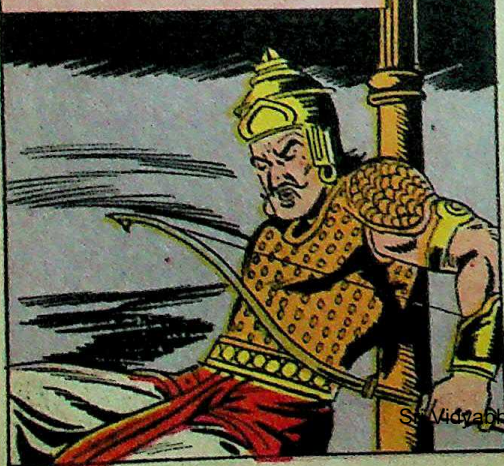


TAKE THIS,
O ARJUNA!

THE SPEAR FOUND ITS MARK.
STAGGERING UNDER THE IMPACT...



...ARJUNA SUPPORTED HIMSELF AGAINST HIS FLAGSTAFF.



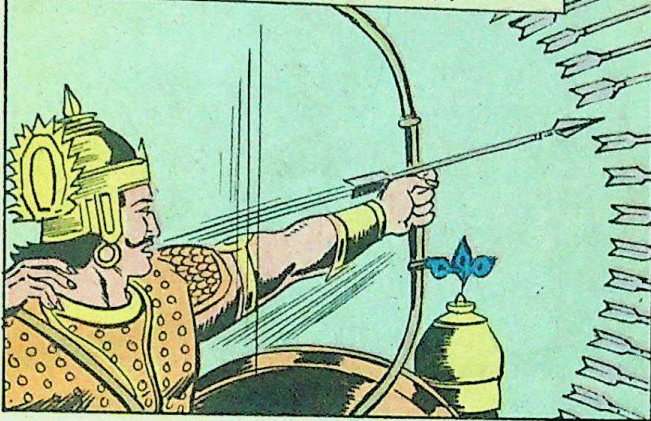
A SHOUT OF JOY RENT THE AIR.



ARJUNA IS
DEAD!

ARJUNA HAS
BEEN KILLED!

BUT SOON ARJUNA RECOVERED AND INVOKED INTO EXISTENCE THE WEAPON NAMED AFTER INDRA, AND FROM IT FLOWED THOUSANDS OF ARROWS.

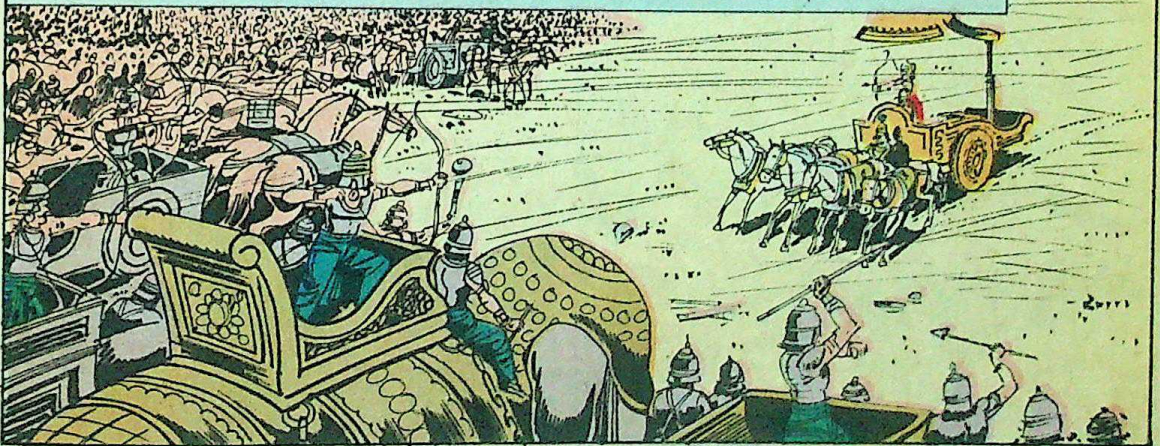


SHRUTAYU FELL AND HIS SOLDIERS BEGAN TO FLEE. ARJUNA'S CHARIOT SPED ON.

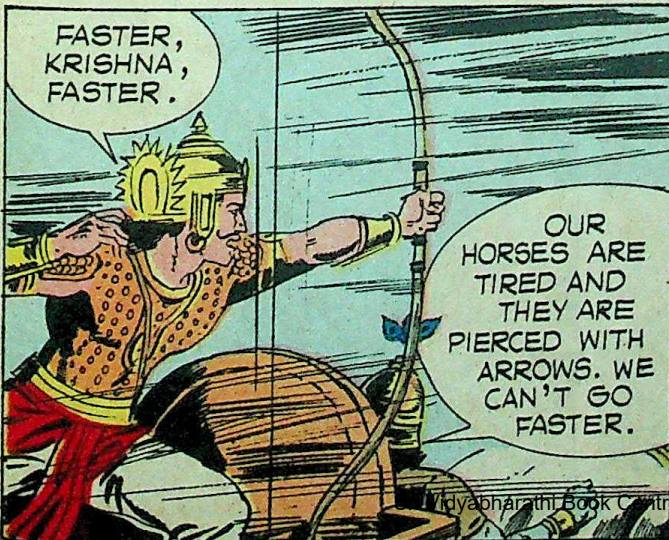


FASTER, KRISHNA, WE HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE WE REACH JAYADRATHA.

BUT ANOTHER SECTION OF DURYODHANA'S ARMY BLOCKED HIS PATH.



FASTER, KRISHNA, FASTER.



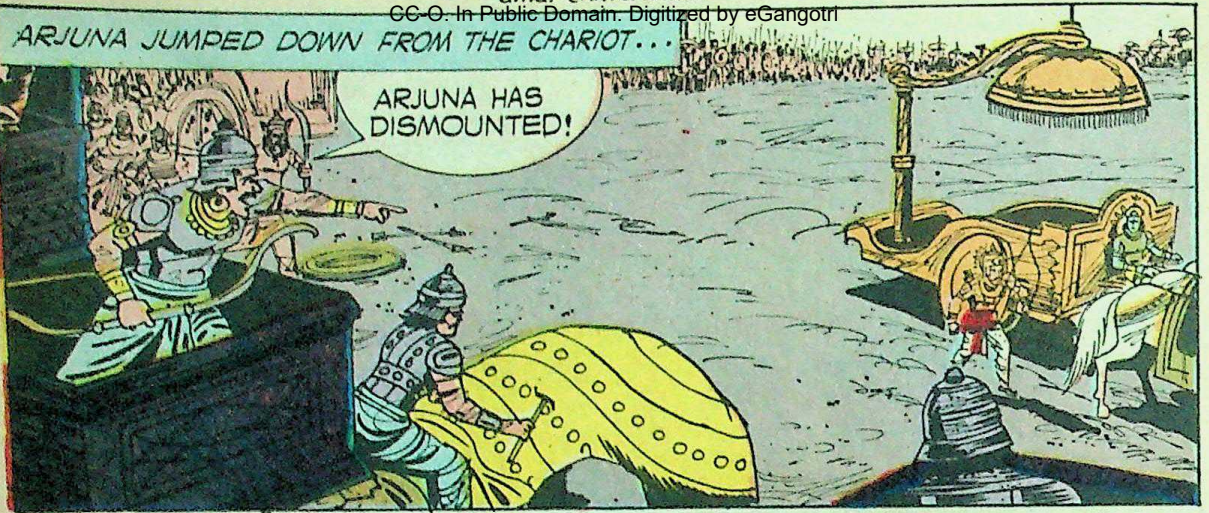
OUR HORSES ARE TIRED AND THEY ARE PIERCED WITH ARROWS. WE CAN'T GO FASTER.

THEN LET'S UNHARNESS THE HORSES AND REMOVE THE ARROWS.



ARJUNA JUMPED DOWN FROM THE CHARIOT...

ARJUNA HAS
DISMOUNTED!



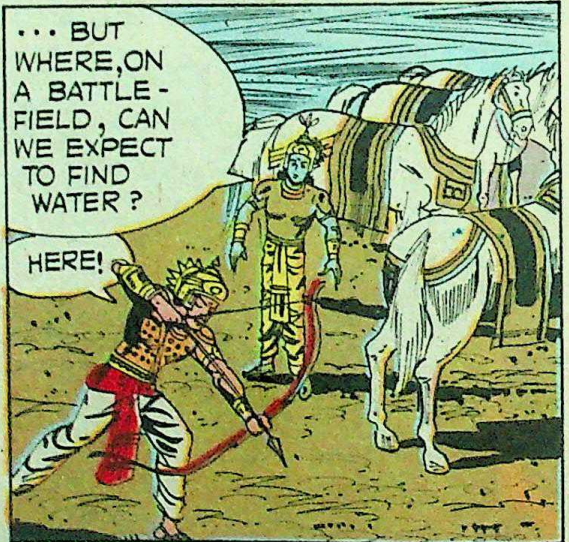
... AND SHIELDED KRISHNA
WITH A SHOWER OF ARROWS.

ARJUNA,
OUR HORSES
NEED WATER
TO DRINK...

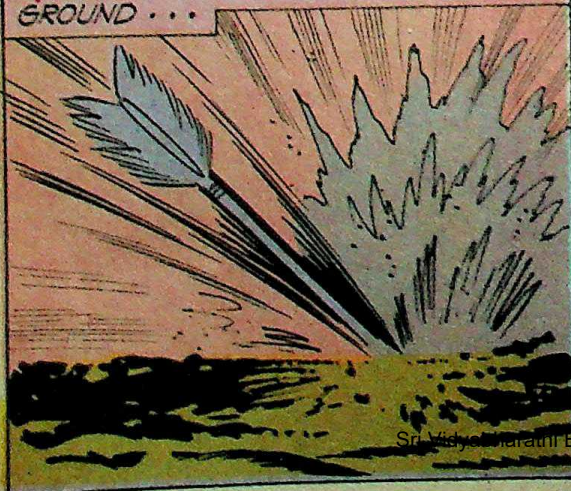


... BUT
WHERE, ON
A BATTLE-
FIELD, CAN
WE EXPECT
TO FIND
WATER?

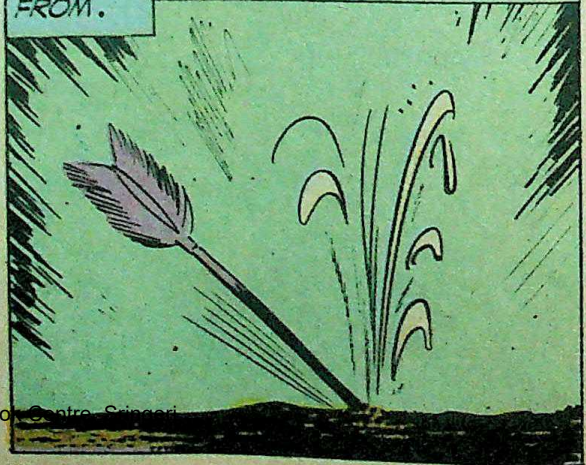
HERE!



ARJUNA SHOT AN ARROW INTO THE
GROUND...



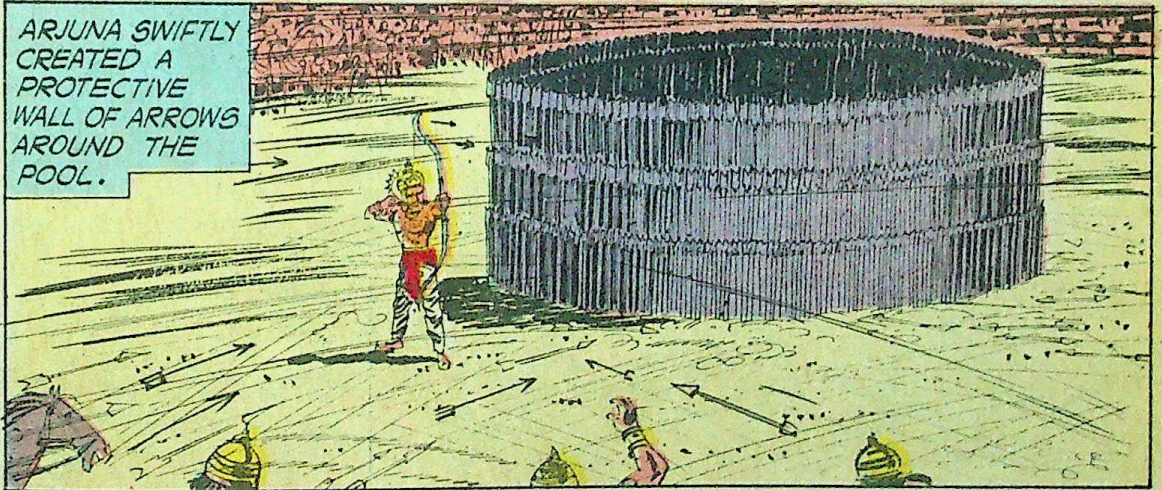
... AND WATER GUSHED OUT, MAKING
A POOL FOR THE HORSES TO DRINK
FROM.



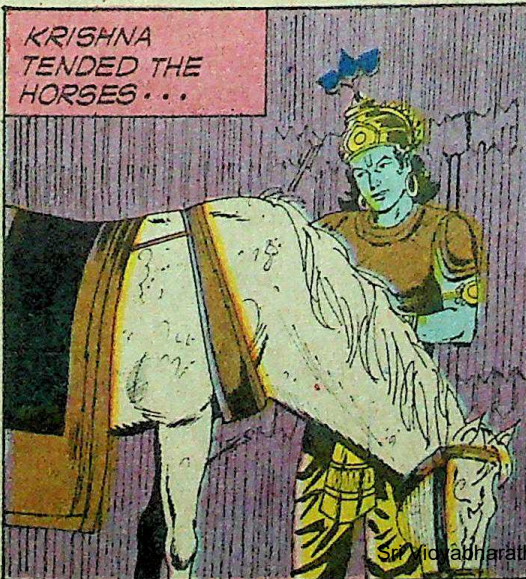
MEANWHILE, DURYODHANA'S MEN MADE A DETERMINED
ATTACK —



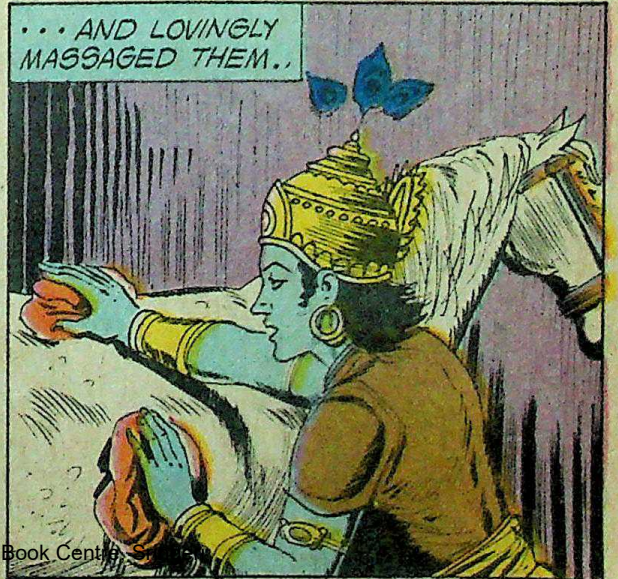
ARJUNA SWIFTLY
CREATED A
PROTECTIVE
WALL OF ARROWS
AROUND THE
POOL.



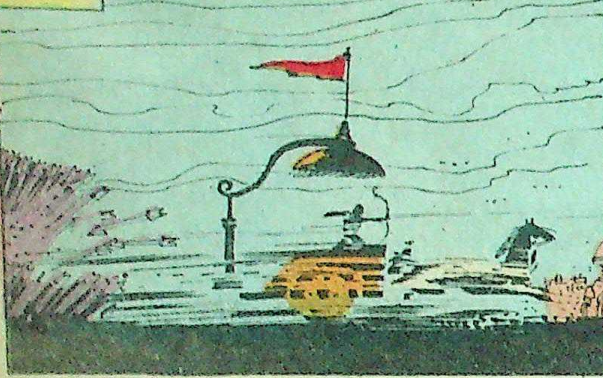
KRISHNA
TENDED THE
HORSES...



... AND LOVINGLY
MASSAGED THEM..



WHEN THE HORSES WERE REFRESHED, THEY WERE HARNESSSED AGAIN AND KRISHNA AND ARJUNA SPEEDILY DROVE ON.



LOOK! KRISHNA AND ARJUNA ARE HERE AGAIN!

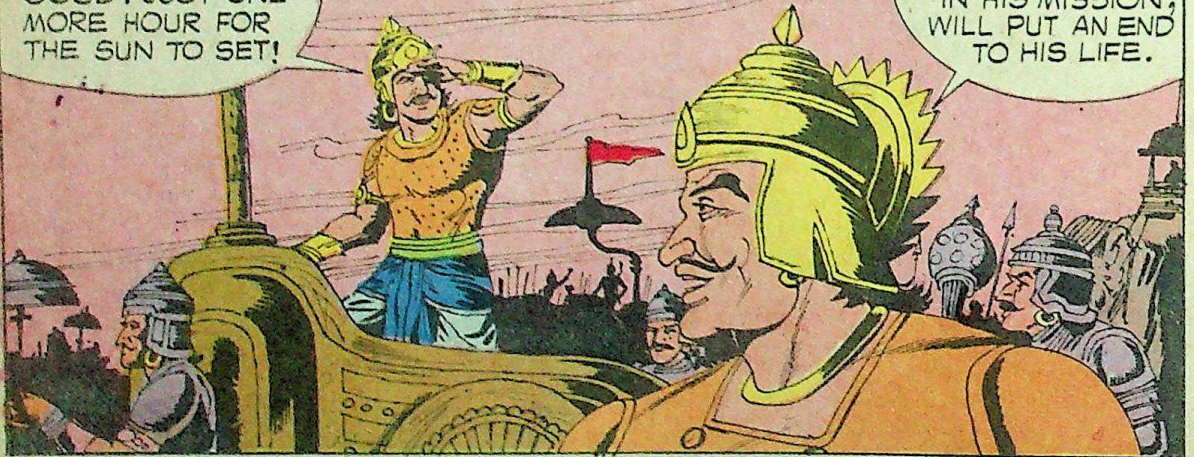
AND OUR ARROWS HAVE MADE NOT A SCRATCH ON THEM!



MEANWHILE JAYADRATHA WAS WATCHING THE SKY INTENTLY—

GOOD! JUST ONE MORE HOUR FOR THE SUN TO SET!

THEN ARJUNA, HAVING FAILED IN HIS MISSION, WILL PUT AN END TO HIS LIFE.



JUST THEN —

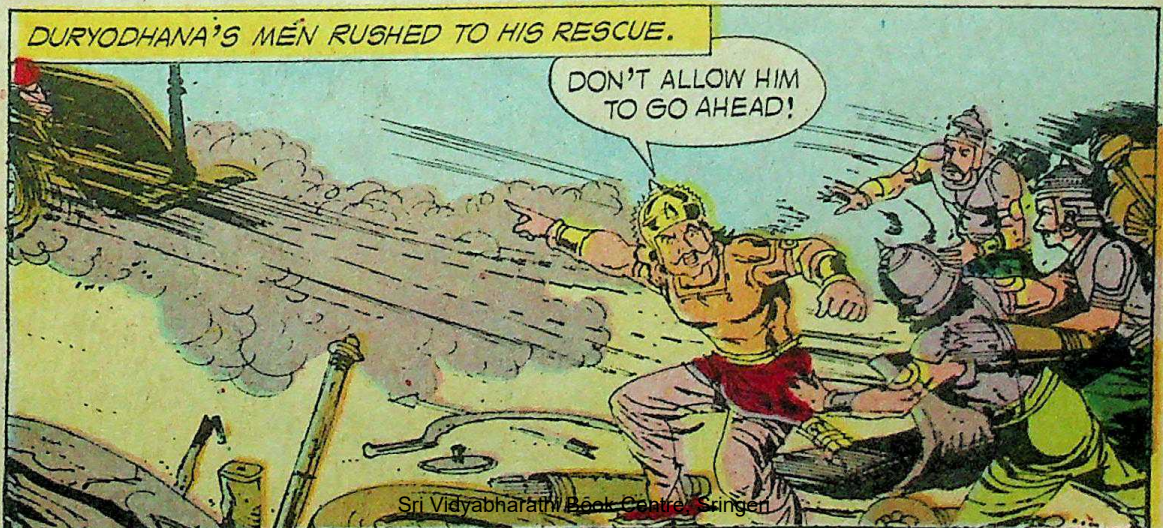
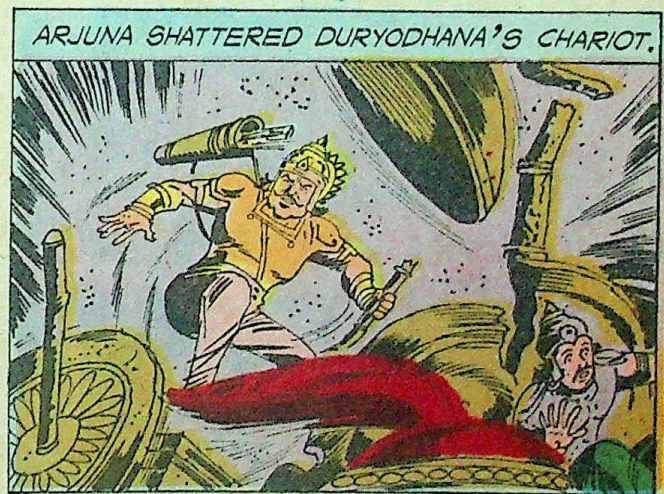
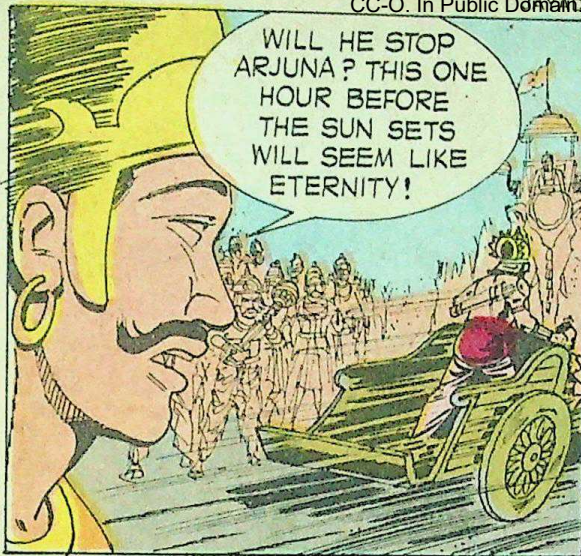
ARJUNA IS COMING!

DURYODHANA, PROTECT ME!

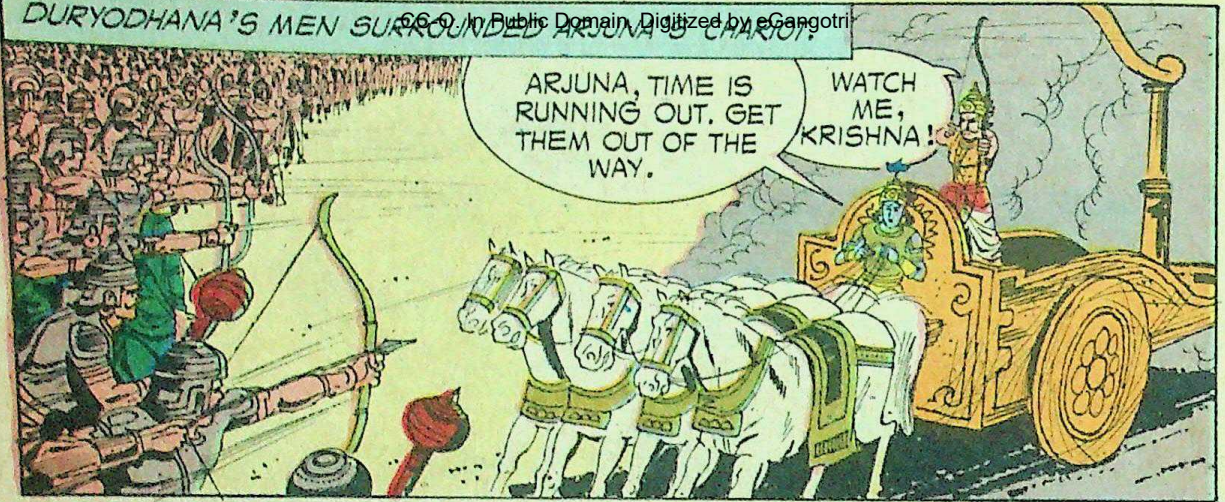


BE CALM, JAYADRATHA. I WILL GO AFTER HIM MYSELF.

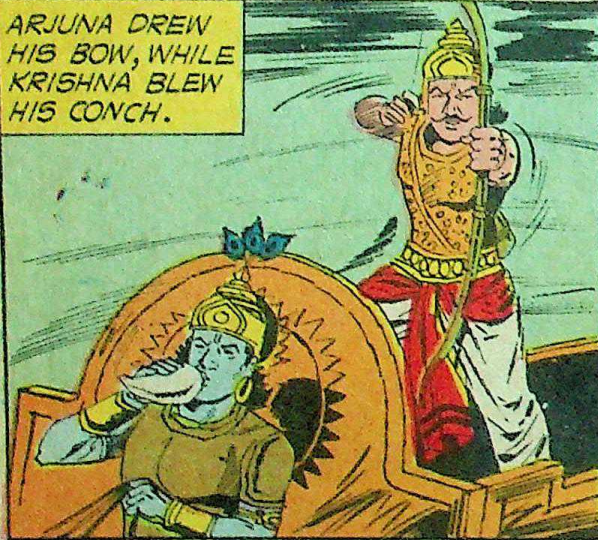




DURYODHANA'S MEN SURROUNDED ARJUNA'S CHARIOT.



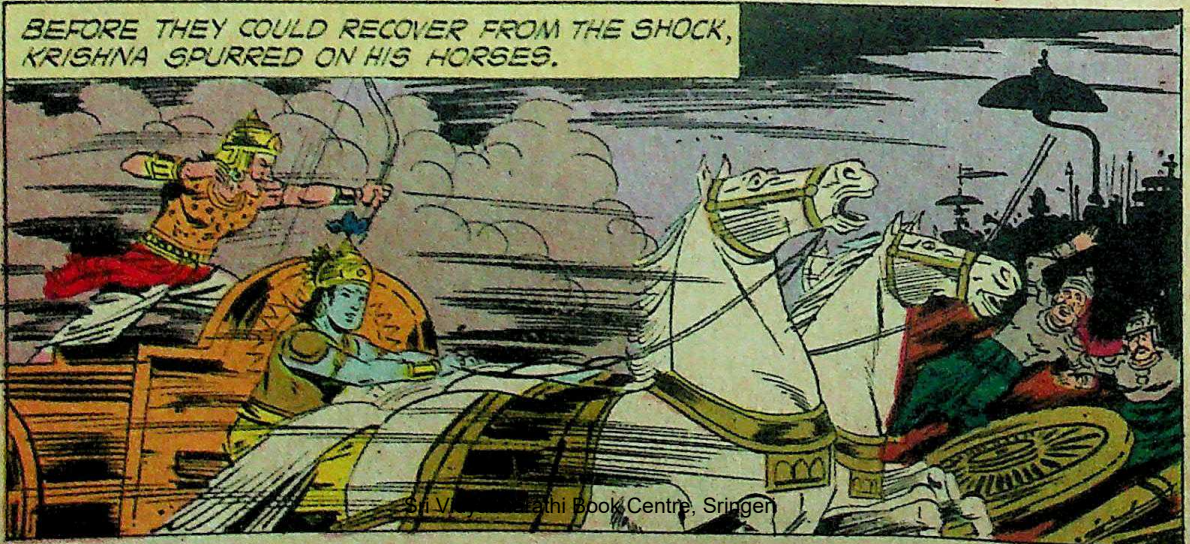
ARJUNA DREW HIS BOW, WHILE KRISHNA BLEW HIS CONCH.



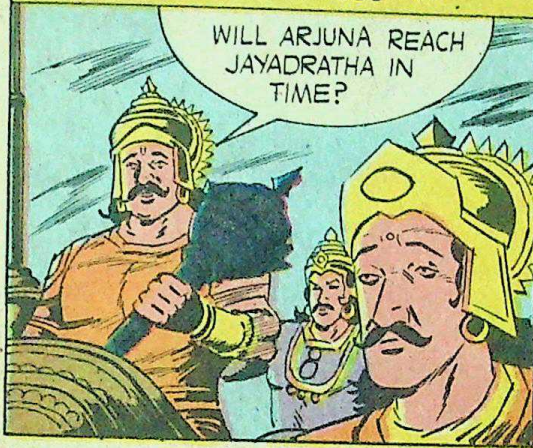
THE BLARE OF KRISHNA'S CONCH AND THE TWANG OF ARJUNA'S BOW HAD A STUNNING EFFECT AND ALL OF DURYODHANA'S MEN FELL TO THE GROUND.



BEFORE THEY COULD RECOVER FROM THE SHOCK, KRISHNA SPURRED ON HIS HORSES.



AS THE EVENING SHADOWS
LENGTHENED, THE PANDAVAS BECAME
MORE AND MORE ANXIOUS ...



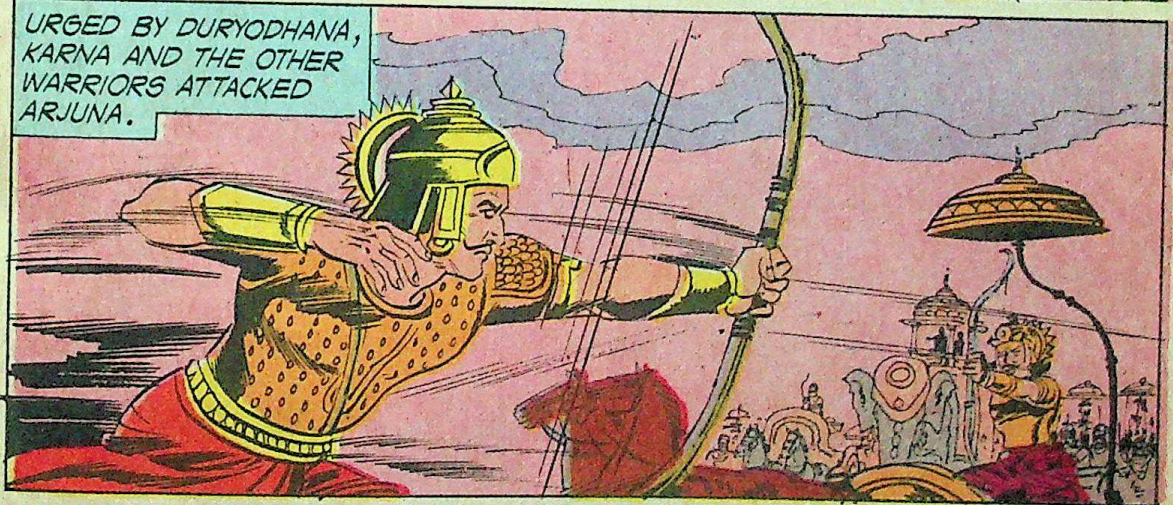
... AND THE KAURAVAS, MORE AND MORE
JUBILANT.

SOON THE SUN
WILL GO DOWN AND
ARJUNA IS STILL
FAR AWAY FROM
JAYADRATHA!

BUT KEEP A CAREFUL
WATCH. HE MUST BE
KEPT AWAY FROM
JAYADRATHA
AT ALL
COSTS.



URGED BY DURYODHANA,
KARNA AND THE OTHER
WARRIORS ATTACKED
ARJUNA.



BUT THEY COULD NOT HOLD HIM OFF FOR LONG —

ARJUNA, AT LAST
WE HAVE FOUND
JAYADRATHA!
THERE HE IS!



BUT, KRISHNA,
THERE ARE SIX
WARRIORS BETWEEN
HIM AND ME. I WON'T
BE ABLE TO KILL
JAYADRATHA BEFORE
THE SUN SETS!

NO, YOU
SHALL
SLAY
HIM!



SUDDENLY IT BECAME DARK.

KRISHNA! THE
SUN HAS SET!

NO, ARJUNA.
THIS IS AN ILLUSION.
YOU HAVE NOTHING
TO FEAR.



JAYADRATHA AND HIS
FRIENDS WERE DECEIVED
BY THE ILLUSION OF DARK-
NESS CAUSED BY KRISHNA.

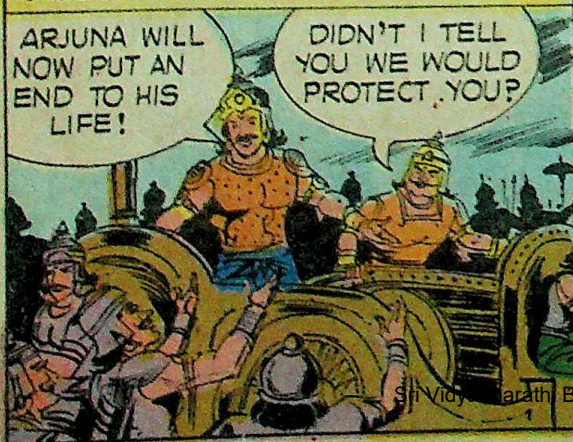
DARKNESS AT
LAST! I AM
SAFE!



DURYODHANA'S MEN PUT DOWN
THEIR WEAPONS AND STOOD UP TO
CHEER THE JUBILANT JAYADRATHA.

ARJUNA WILL
NOW PUT AN
END TO HIS
LIFE!

DIDN'T I TELL
YOU WE WOULD
PROTECT YOU?



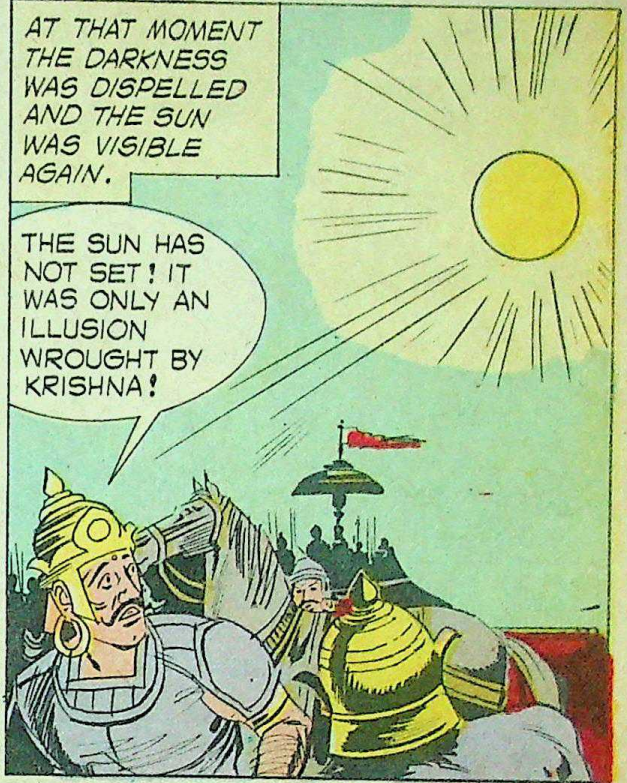
THEN ARJUNA STRUCK—





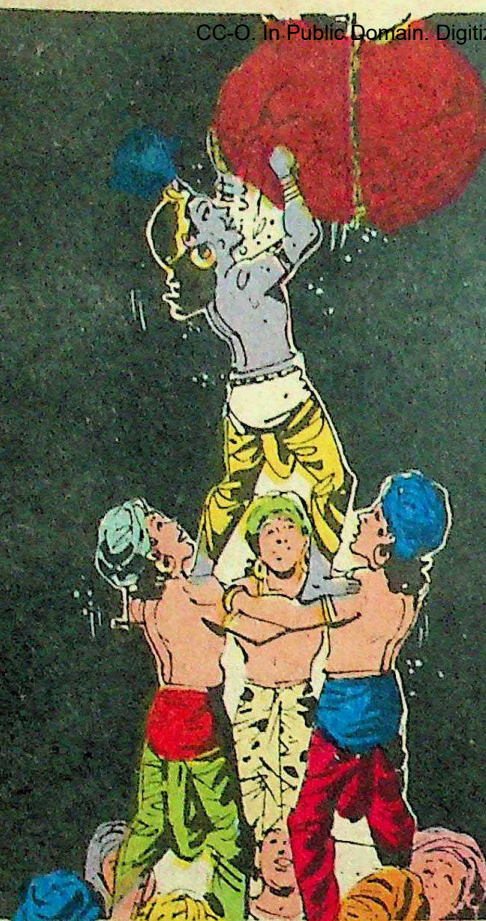
AT THAT MOMENT
THE DARKNESS
WAS DISPELLED
AND THE SUN
WAS VISIBLE
AGAIN.

THE SUN HAS
NOT SET ! IT
WAS ONLY AN
ILLUSION
WROUGHT BY
KRISHNA !



VICTORIOUS, KRISHNA AND ARJUNA
BLEW THEIR CONCHES TO ANNOUNCE
THEIR VICTORY.





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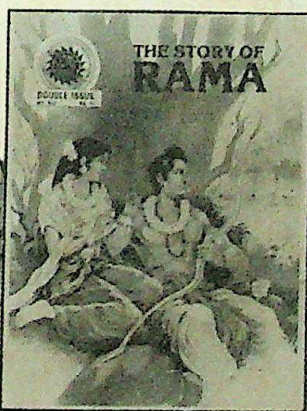
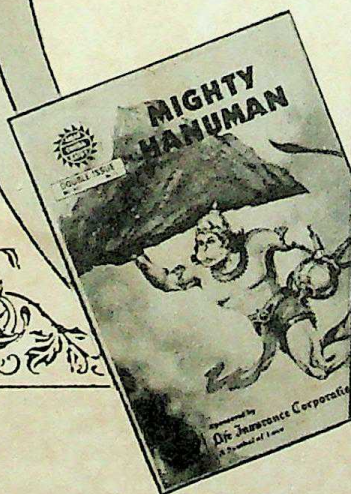
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